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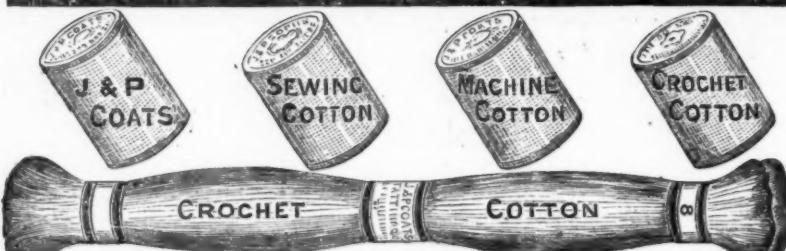
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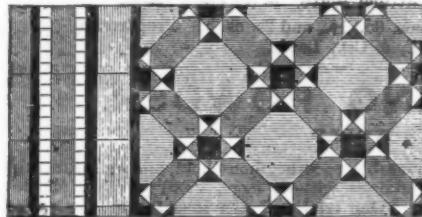
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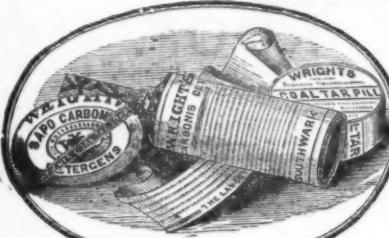
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VIXEN.

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CHAPTER XXXVI. GOING INTO EXILE.

Two hours later the carriage was at the door, and Violet Tempest was ready to start. Argus was by her side, his collar provided with a leather strap, by which she could hold him when necessary. Captain Winstanley was smoking a cigar in the porch.

Mrs. Winstanley came weeping out of the drawing-room, and hugged her daughter silently. Violet returned the embrace, but said not a word till just at the last.

"Dear mother," she whispered earnestly, "never be unhappy about me. Let me bear the blame of all that has gone amiss between us."

"You had better be quick, Miss Tempest, if you want to be in time for the boat," said the captain from the porch.

"I am quite ready," answered Vixen calmly.

Phoebe was at the carriage door, tearful, and in everybody's way, but pretending to help. Argus was sent up to the box, where he sat beside the coachman with much gravity of demeanour, having first assured himself that his mistress was inside the carriage. Mrs. Winstanley stood in the porch, kissing her hand; and so the strong big horses bore the carriage away through the dark shrubberies, between banks of shadowy foliage, out into the forest-road, which was full of ghosts at this late hour, and would have struck terror to the hearts of any horses unaccustomed to its sylvan mysteries.

They drove through Lyndhurst, where the twinkling little lights in the shop-windows were being extinguished by

envious shutters, and where the shopkeepers paused in their work of extinction to stare amazedly at the passing carriage; not that a carriage was a strange apparition in Lyndhurst, but because the inhabitants had so little to do except stare.

Anon they came to Bolton's Bench, beneath a cluster of pine-trees on a hilly bit of common, and then the long straight road to Southampton lay before them in the faint moonshine, with boggy levels, black furze-bushes, and a background of wood on either side. Violet sat looking steadily out of the window, watching every bit of the road. How could she tell when she would see it again—or if ever, save in sad regretful dreams?

They mounted the hill, from whose crest Vixen took one last backward look at the wide wild land that lay behind them—a look of ineffable love and longing. And then she threw herself back in the carriage, and gave herself up to gloomy thought. There was nothing more that she cared to see. They had entered the tame dull world of civilisation. They drove through the village of Eling, where lights burned dimly here and there in upper windows; they crossed the slow meandering river at Redbridge. Already the low line of lights in Southampton city began to shine faintly in the distance. Violet shut her eyes and let the landscape go by. Suburban villas, suburban gardens on a straight road beside a broad river with very little water in it. There was nothing here to regret.

It was past eleven when they drove under the old bar, and through the high street of Southampton. The town seemed strange to Vixen at this unusual hour. Down by the docks everything had a grey and misty look, sky and water indistinguish-

able. There lay the Jersey boat, snorting and puffing, amidst the dim greyness. Captain Winstanley conducted his charge to the ladies' cabin, with no more words than were positively necessary. They had not spoken once during the drive from the Abbey House to Southampton.

"I think you had better stay down here till the vessel has started, at any rate," said the captain, "there will be so much bustle and confusion on deck. I'll take care of your dog."

"Thanks," answered Vixen meekly. "Yes, I'll stay here—you need not trouble yourself about me."

"Shall I send you something? A cup of tea, the wing of a chicken, a little wine and water?"

"No, thanks; I don't care about anything."

The captain withdrew after this to look after the luggage, and to secure his own berth. The stewardess received Violet as if she had known her all her life, showed her the couch allotted to her, and to secure which the captain had telegraphed that morning from Lyndhurst.

"It was lucky your good gentleman took the precaution to telegraph, mum," said the cordial stewardess; "the boats are always crowded at this time of year, and the Fanny is such a favourite."

The cabin was wide and lofty and airy, quite an exceptional thing in ladies' cabins; but presently there came a troop of stout matrons with their olive-branches, all cross and sleepy, and dazed at finding themselves in a strange place at an unearthly hour. There was the usual sprinkling of babies, and most of the babies cried. One baby was afflicted with unmistakable whooping cough, and was a source of terror to the mothers of all the other babies. There was a general opening of hand-bags, and distribution of buns, biscuits, and sweeties for the comfort and solace of this small fry. Milk was imbibed noisily out of bottles, some of them provided with gutta-percha tubes, which made the process of refreshment look like laying on gas. Vixen turned her back upon the turmoil, and listened to the sad sea waves plashing lazily against the side of the boat.

She wondered what Rorie was doing at this midnight hour? Did he know yet that she was gone—vanished out of his life for ever? No; he could hardly have heard of her departure yet awhile, swiftly as all tidings travelled in that rustic world of the Forest. Had he made up his mind

to keep faith with Lady Mabel? Had he forgiven Vixen for refusing to abet him in treachery against his affianced?

"Poor Rorie," sighed the girl; "I think we might have been happy together."

And then she remembered the days of old, when Mr. Vawdrey was free, and when it had never dawned upon his slow intelligence that his old playfellow, Violet Tempest, was the one woman in all this wide world who had the power to make his life happy.

"I think he thought lightly of me because of all our foolishness when he was a boy," mused Vixen. "I seemed to him less than other women, because of those old sweet memories—instead of more."

It was a dreary voyage for Violet Tempest—a kind of maritime purgatory. The monotonous thud of the engine, the tramping of feet overhead, the creaking and groaning of the vessel, the squalling babies, the fussy mothers, the dreadful people who could not travel from Southampton to Jersey on a calm summer night without exhibiting all the horrors of seasickness. Vixen thought of the sufferings of poor black human creatures in the middle passage, of the ghastly terrors of a mutiny, of a ship on fire, of the Ancient Mariner on his slimy sea. She wondered in her weary soul whether these horrors, which literature had made familiar to her, were much worse than the smart white and gold cabin of the good ship Fanny, filled to overflowing with the contents of half-a-dozen nurseries.

Towards daybreak there came a lull. The croakest of the babies had exhausted its capacity for making its fellow-creatures miserable. The sea-sick mothers and nurses had left off groaning, and starting convulsively from their pillows with wild shrieks for the stewardess, and had sunk into troubled slumbers. Vixen turned her back upon the dreadful scene—dimly lighted by flickering oil-lamps, like those that burn before saintly shrines in an old French cathedral—and shut her eyes and tried to lose herself in the tangled wilderness of sleep. But to-night that blessed refuge of the unhappy was closed against her. The calm angel of sleep would have nothing to do with a soul so troubled. She could only lie staring at the port-hole, which stared back at her like a giant's dark angry eye, and waiting for morning.

Morning came at last, with the skirmishing toilets of the children, fearful struggles for brushes and combs, towel

fights, perpetual clamour for missing pieces of soap, a great deal of talk about strings and buttons, and a chorus of crying babies. Then stole through the stuffy atmosphere savoury odours of breakfast, the fumes of coffee, fried bacon, grilled fish. Sloppy looking cups of tea were administered to the sufferers of last night. The yellow sunshine filled the cabin. Vixen made a hasty toilet, and hurried up to the deck. Here all was glorious. A vast world of sunlit water. No sign yet of rock-bound island above the white-crested waves. The steamer might have been in the midst of the Atlantic. Captain Winstanley was on the bridge, smoking his morning cigar. He gave Violet a cool nod, which she returned as coolly. She found a quiet corner where she could sit and watch the waves slowly rising and falling, the white foam-crests slowly gathering, the light spray dashing against the side of the boat, the cataract of white roaring water leaping from the swift paddle-wheel and melting into a long track of foam. By-and-by they came to Guernsey, which looked grim and not particularly inviting, even in the morning sunlight. That picturesque island hides her beauties from those who only behold her from the sea. Here there was an exodus of passengers and of luggage, and an invasion of natives with baskets of fruit. Vixen bought some grapes and peaches of a female native in a cap, whose patois was the funniest perversion of French and English imaginable. And then a bell rang clamorously, and there was a general stampede; and the gangway was pulled up, and the vessel was steaming gaily towards Jersey; while Vixen sat eating grapes and looking dreamily skyward, and wondering whether her mother was sleeping peacefully under the dear old Abbey House roof, undisturbed by any pang of remorse for having parted with an only child so lightly.

An hour or so and Jersey was in sight, all rocky peaks and promontories. Anon the steamer swept round a sudden curve, and lo, Vixen beheld a bristling range of fortifications, a rather untidy harbour, and the usual accompaniments of a landing-place, the midsummer sun shining vividly upon the all-pervading whiteness.

"Is this the bay that some people have compared to Naples?" Violet asked her conductor, with a contemptuous curl of her mobile lip, as she and Captain Winstanley took their seats in a roomy

old fly, upon which the luggage was being piled.

"You have not seen it yet from the Neapolitan point of view," said the captain. "This quay is not the prettiest bit of Jersey."

"I am glad of that, very glad," answered Vixen acidly; "for if it were, the Jersey notion of the beautiful would be my idea of ugliness. Oh, what an utterly too horrid street!" she cried, as the fly drove through the squalid approach to the town, past dirty gutter-bred children, and women with babies, who looked to the last degree Irish, and the dead high wall of the fortifications. "Does your aunt live hereabouts, par exemple, Captain Winstanley?"

"My aunt lives six good miles from here, Miss Tempest, in one of the loveliest spots in the island, amidst scenery that is almost as fine as the Pyrenees."

"I have heard people say that of anything respectable in the shape of a hill," answered Vixen, with a dubious air.

She was in a humour to take objection to everything, and had a flippant air curiously at variance with the dull aching of her heart. She was determined to take the situation lightly. Not for worlds would she have let Captain Winstanley see her wounds, or guess how deep they were. She set her face steadily towards the hills in which her place of exile was hidden, and bore herself bravely. Conrad Winstanley gave her many a furtive glance as he sat opposite her in the fly, while they drove slowly up the steep green country lanes, leaving the white town in the valley below them.

"The place is not so bad, after all," said Vixen, looking back at the conglomeration of white walls and slate roofs, of docks, and shipping, and barracks, on the edge of a world of blue water, "not nearly so odious as it looked when we landed. But it is a little disappointing at best, like all places that people praise ridiculously. I had pictured Jersey as a tropical island, with cactuses and Cape jasmine growing in the hedges, orchards of peaches and apricots, and melons running wild."

"To my mind the island is a pocket edition of Devonshire, with a dash of Brittany," answered the captain. "There's a fig-tree for you!" he cried, pointing to a great spreading mass of five-fingered leaves lolloping over a pink plastered garden-wall—an old untidy tree that had swallowed up the whole extent of a

cottager's garden. "You don't see anything like that in the Forest."

"No," answered Vixen, tightening her lips; "we have only oaks and beeches that have been growing since the Hep-tarchy."

And now they entered a long lane, where the interlaced tree-tops made an arcade of foliage—a lane whose beauty even Vixen could not gainsay. Ah, there were the Hampshire ferns on the steep green banks! She gave a little choking sob at sight of them, as if they had been living things. Hart's-tongue, and ladyfern, and the whole family of osmundas. Yes; they were all there. It was like home—with a difference.

Here and there they passed a modern villa, in its park-like grounds, and the captain, who evidently wished to be pleasant, tried to expound to Violet the conditions of Jersey leases, and the difficulties which attend the purchase of land or tenements in that feudal settlement. But Vixen did not even endeavour to understand him. She listened with an air of polite vacancy which was not encouraging.

They passed various humbler homesteads, painted a lively pink, or a refreshing lavender, with gardens where the fuchsias were trees covered with crimson bloom, and where gigantic hydrangeas blossomed in palest pink and brightest azure in wildest abundance. Here Vixen beheld for the first time those preposterous cabbages, from whose hyper-natural growth the islanders seem to derive a loftier pride than from any other productions of the island, not excepting its grapes and its lobsters.

"I don't suppose you ever saw cabbages growing six feet high before," said the captain.

"No," answered Vixen; "they are too preposterous to be met with in a civilised country. Poor Charles the Second! I don't wonder that he was wild and riotous when he came to be king."

"Why not?"

"Because he had spent several months of exile among his loyal subjects in Jersey. A man who had been buried alive in such a fragmentary bit of the world must have required some compensation in after life."

They had mounted a long hill which seemed the pinnacle of the island, and from whose fertile summit the view was full of beauty—a green undulating garden-world, ringed with yellow sands and bright blue sea; and now they began to descend

gently by a winding lane where again the topmost elm-branches were interwoven, and where the glowing June day was softened to a tender twilight. A curve in the lane brought them suddenly to an old gateway, with a crumbling stone bench in a nook beside it—a bench where the wayfarer used to sit and wait for alms, when the site of Les Tourelles was occupied by a monastery.

The old manor-house rose up behind the dilapidated wall—a goodly old house as to size and form—overlooking a noble sweep of hillside and valley; a house with a gallery on the roof for purposes of observation, but with as dreary and abandoned a look about its blank curtainless windows as if mansion and estate had been in Chancery for the last half-century.

"A fine old place, is it not?" asked the captain, while a cracked bell was jingling in remote distance, amidst the drowsy summer-stillness, without eliciting so much as the bark of a house-dog.

"It looks very big," Violet answered dubiously, "and very empty."

"My aunt has no relatives residing with her."

"If she had started in life with a large family of brothers and sisters I should think they would all be dead by this time," said the girl, with a stifled yawn that was half a sigh.

"How do you mean?"

"They would have died of the stillness and solitude and all-pervading desolation of Les Tourelles."

"Strange houses are apt to look desolate."

"Yes. Particularly when the windows have neither blinds nor curtains, and the walls have not been painted for a century."

After this conversation flagged. The jingling bell was once more set going in the distance; Vixen sat looking sleepily at the arched roof of foliage chequered with blue sky. Argus lolled against the carriage door with his tongue out.

They waited five minutes or so, languidly expectant. Vixen began to wonder whether the gates would ever open—whether there were really any living human creatures in that blank dead-looking house—whether they would not have to give up all idea of entering, and drive back to the harbour, and return to Hampshire by the way they had come.

While she sat idly wondering thus, with the sleepy buzz of summer insects and melodious twittering of birds soothing her senses like a lullaby, the old gate groaned

upon its rusty hinges, and a middle-aged woman in a black gown and a white cap appeared—a woman who recognised Captain Winstanley with a curtsey, and came out to receive the smaller packages from the flyman.

"Antony will take the portmanteaux," she said. "The boat must have come in earlier than usual. We did not expect you so soon."

"This is one of Miss Skipwith's servants," thought Vixen; "rather a vinegary personage. I hope the other maids are nicer."

The person spoken of as Antony now appeared, and began to hale about Violet's portmanteaux. He was a middle-aged man, with a bald head and a melancholy aspect. His raiment was shabby; his costume something between that of a lawyer's clerk and an agricultural labourer. Argus saluted this individual with a suppressed growl.

"Sh!" cried the female vindictively, flapping her apron at the dog; "whose dog is this, sir? He doesn't belong to you, surely?"

"He belongs to Miss Tempest. You must find a corner for him somewhere in the outbuildings, Hannah," said the captain. "The dog is harmless enough, and friendly enough when he is used to people."

"That won't be much good if he bites us before he gets used to us, and we die of hydrophobia in the meantime," retorted Hannah; "I believe he has taken a dislike to Antony already."

"Argus won't bite anyone," said Vixen, laying her hand upon the dog's collar; "I'll answer for his good conduct. Please try and find him a nice snug nest somewhere—if I mustn't have him in the house."

"In the house!" cried Hannah. "Miss Skipwith would faint at the mention of such a thing. I don't know how she'll ever put up with a huge beast like that anywhere about the place. He must be kept as much out of her sight as possible."

"I'm sorry Argus isn't welcome," said Vixen proudly.

She was thinking that her own welcome at Les Tourelles could hardly be more cordial than that accorded to Argus. She had left home because nobody wanted her there. How could she expect that anyone wanted her here, where she was a stranger, preceded, perhaps, by the reputation of her vices? The woman in the rusty mourning-gown, the man in the

shabby raiment and clod-hopper boots, gave her no smile of greeting. Over this new home of hers there hung an unspeakable melancholy. Her heart sank as she crossed the threshold.

ROYAL HIDE AND SEEK.

WHEN Alfred the Great brought down upon his devoted head the wrath of the herdsman's wife for allowing the oaten cakes to burn upon the hearth, he was doing that which many an English king and prince has since done—keeping his real rank concealed for a time, under peril of discovery by enemies. In the present altered condition of society and government among us, this kind of strategy appears strange and undignified; but in the stormy days of old there were ample reasons for kings and princes playing occasionally and unwillingly the game of hide and seek.

Alfred had no bed of roses to lie upon when a Saxon prince. In one of his early struggles with the Danes he met with defeat, and sought refuge in Somersetshire; where an islet, or small island, in the middle of a marsh received in consequence the name of Athelney, or Ethelney, Prince's Island. We fear that one part of the cake story sadly needs confirmation, to the effect that Alfred, remembering in after years the faithfulness of Denulf the swineherd (with whom he had remained in concealment about three months), had him educated up to the level of those times, and made him Bishop of Winchester. Denulf had prudence enough to keep the secret of the prince's incognito from the gudewife; but this, it must be admitted, seems only a small step towards earning a bishopric.

Another concealment of Alfred was in the Danish camp. Wishing to know what his enemies were about in Wiltshire, he resolved on ascertaining the fact for himself. Trusting to his skill as a harper, and to his store of lays and legends, which formed the lore of the minstrels in those days, he attired himself accordingly, and gained access to the camp of Guthrum the chief. The Danes, pleased with the performance of the gleeman or minstrel, invited him to a tent wherein some of the leading men were feasting. He overheard their conversation, and learned thereby their plans for a renewed attack. Of course, they were not Moltkes, else we

might marvel at military leaders being so indiscreet in the presence of a wandering minstrel. Alfred contrived to quit the camp undiscovered, and made prompt use of the knowledge he had gained in this singular way by giving the Danes a severe defeat at the battle of Ethandune—supposed to be the present Wiltshire town of Yatton.

Richard Cœur de Lion, a favourite with most young readers of history, who admire brilliant achievements without scanning very narrowly the moral characters of heroes, was one among our English kings who resorted to disguises. In the year 1192, when matters were going unfavourably with the crusaders in the Holy Land, Richard, with his queen, his sister, and many English barons and knights, set sail from Acre to return to England. He had a doubtful journey before him; seeing that some of the sovereigns and princes, through whose territories he would have to pass, were, on various grounds, hostile to him. The galley which conveyed the royal ladies and their suite reached Sicily and Marseilles in safety. Richard and his retainers voyaged by way of Corfu, Ragusa, and Zara, and then travelled inland through the dominions of the Archduke of Austria. This was an unlucky proceeding; for the archduke was one of his deadliest enemies. Richard disguised himself as a pilgrim, Hugh the merchant, returning from Jerusalem; and with long hair and beard, hoped to travel onward without being discovered. But he was too free with his wealth. A ruby ring was sent as a present to the governor of Goritz, as a means of obtaining a free pass for Richard and his companions. The beauty and value of the ruby led Maynard, the governor, to suspect that the apparent pilgrim was some great personage, and the English wayfarers galloped on distrustfully, without waiting for a passport. His attendants were captured one by one; and he himself, with one knight, and a boy who spoke the language of the country, arrived at Erpurg, a village near Vienna, worn out with hunger and fatigue. A worse place he could hardly have lighted upon to seek rest; but nature could hold out no longer. He sent the boy to the Vienna market-place to buy food; this was often repeated; and the dealers marvelled at the freedom with which money seemed to be forthcoming. This led to such interrogations and threats that the boy at length revealed the truth; and in a few hours the king was

a prisoner in the hands of the Archduke Leopold. The emperor, Henry the Third, bargained with Leopold for a transfer of the person of Richard, who was equally feared and disliked by both of them.

Here it would be pleasant to give credence to the romantic story of Blondel the minstrel. This story was fully believed during many centuries, and some writers still hold to it; but close examination has led the majority of recent authorities to discredit it. Blondel or no Blondel, however, Richard was certainly imprisoned for more than a year in one or more German castles.

The attempted escape of Mary Queen of Scots from Loch Leven was a case of royal disguise. She knew that if she could once quit the castle, and cross the lake, friends would be on the opposite shore awaiting her; but she was strictly watched, and had need of every precaution. One morning her laundress came to her, and exchanged dresses with the royal lady; attired in humble weeds, muffler, and fardel, Mary was conveyed across the lake by boatmen who did not suspect her to be other than she seemed to be—or rather, they did suspect something, on account of a certain elegance of form and deportment of a gentlewoman not usual among laundresses. One of them, in merry mood, endeavoured to remove the muffler from her face, to see what sort of a dame she might perchance be. "She put up her hands," said Sir William Drury in a letter to Secretary Cecil, "which they espied to be very fair and white; where-with they entered into suspicion whom she might be, beginning to wonder at her enterprise. Whereat she was a little dismayed, but charged them, on danger of their lives, to row her over to the shore; which they nothing regarded, but straight-way rowed her back again." She was, of course, more closely watched after this; nevertheless, she really effected her escape five weeks afterwards. Sir William Douglas, governor of Loch Leven Castle, had a son, William, about seventeen or eighteen years of age. Whether through love of adventure, or sympathy for Queen Mary, he connived at a scheme for her escape. One evening, when Sir William and Lady Douglas were at supper, the youth obtained possession of the keys of the outer gates from the keeper's chamber. Mary, her maid, and William passed safely out of the castle, sufficiently muffled to ward off attention. They entered a boat,

which the maid helped William to row ; he having locked the castle gates after him, and thrown the keys into the lake. Mary safely reached the opposite shore, where numerous well-armed adherents awaited her. How short-lived was her freedom it is not here to tell.

Charles the Second was a famous example of hide-and-seek royalty, at one period of his career. Good reason had he for concealment ; seeing that his life would not have been worth many days' purchase had he been captured by the Puritans. He had just passed his twenty-first birthday when his army was defeated by Cromwell at the decisive battle of Worcester. The young king's military strength was at once broken up, and he fled—few but himself knew whither. The Parliamentarians offered one thousand pounds to any person who would find him, and threatened death to anyone who harboured him ; the country was scoured by pursuers, and the magistrates were ordered to detain all doubtful persons. Immediately after the battle, Charles and some of his officers planned a retreat to France or Holland, but were put to their wits' end for the means of accomplishing it. Making the best of their way towards London, their guide failed them on Kinver Heath. After a brief consultation, Charles, with a small retinue, galloped off to Boscombe on the borders of Staffordshire. By early morn they reached an old deserted convent called White Ladies, where he put on his first disguise, that of a peasant labourer. With cropped hair, discoloured face and hands, and wood-bill on his shoulder, he sallied forth as a woodman. Two peasants guided him to Madeley, where he rested that night, and next day reached Boscombe House, the residence of a faithful adherent named Giffard. Remaining only a brief time, Charles set off on foot towards London. He wore a pair of ordinary grey cloth breeches, a leathern doublet, and a countryman's green jerkin ; his only companion being a husbandman named Richard Penderel. No sooner had they reached the edge of Boscombe Wood, than they saw Puritan soldiers hunting about in all directions ; and it was by a very narrow chance that a hiding-place was found. Matters looked so serious that Charles changed his plan ; he resolved to try for some Welsh port instead of venturing towards London. Baffled in two or three new attempts, he returned to Boscombe House ; where

Colonel Careless, who knew the neighbourhood well, offered to be his guide. After spending a quiet Sunday in the house, the king and the colonel climbed into a fine old oak in the park, taking up a little plain food with them. Peeping down cautiously between the trees, the two fugitives more than once saw Puritan soldiers beating the woods in search of them. The anxious day came to an end without disaster. The King's Oak, or Royal Oak, at Boscombe, became in more peaceful times so famous, and, indeed, so reverenced by the cavaliers, that they left scarcely a scrap of it untouched, carrying it away piecemeal to carve into relics. A few years ago it was stated that on the north side of the Serpentine, in Hyde Park, stood the stem and a few branches of an old oak, which had sprung from a sapling of the Royal Oak.

To return to the crownless fugitive. Descending cautiously from the tree at night, the king and Careless, disguised as servants, rode forth at break of day. Meeting with Lord Wilmot, a Royalist, they agreed to place themselves under the guidance of Colonel Lane, who lived at Bentley. A scheme was planned between them for taking ship, if possible, at Bristol. But how to get there, with Parliamentary troops all over the western counties ? Mrs. Norton, a kinswoman of Lane, was residing near that city ; and a pass was, with some difficulty, obtained for Miss Lane and a servant to go and visit her during an illness under which she lay. The servant was King Charles, behind whom Miss Lane rode on a pillion. When they arrived at Norton's, the king was at once recognised by Pope, the butler, who promised to keep his secret—and he did so ; for Charles had a greater number of faithful adherents than his subsequent profligate life showed him to have deserved. Another check, however, occurred. It was found that no ship would sail from Bristol, either to France or to Spain, for nearly a month. A delay for so long a time being perilous, Charles opened communications with Colonel Windham, a Dorsetshire Royalist. Travelling cautiously, and often sleeping at night in the Priest's Hole (a secret chamber which many old mansions contained in those troubled times), the king reached Colonel Windham's house, where he was deferentially received and well sheltered. So carefully was the secret kept, that the king's friends, in most parts of England, were quite ignorant of his

movements, and anxious for his personal safety.

The difficulties were not yet brought to an end. How to set sail from the Dorset coast was a problem to solve. The young king travelled from place to place, assuming one disguise after another, and incurring numerous risks of discovery: now from Windham House to a considerable distance, and back again; now to Sherborne; and, at length, to Lyme Regis, where he tried in vain to hire a vessel for a nobleman and his servant—the king, of course, being himself the servant. He was very nearly detected by the ostler of an inn at Bridport, who had seen him many years earlier; another escape was from the suspicions of a farrier, who noticed that the shoes of the king's horse were of north-country make, not such as were usually seen in the south of England. Frustrated at all points in Dorset, the wanderer next tried Hampshire, but failed again. Advancing cautiously along the Sussex coast, and varying his disguises frequently, he came at length to Shoreham, where success rewarded him. The master of a small vessel agreed to take him over to the coast of France. Charles, to avoid any appearance of rank or distinction, supped at the skipper's small house that night. Here, again, he had a narrow escape; for the skipper remembered having seen him with the royal fleet in the days of the late king. Faithful, as so many others had been, the skipper kept the secret, and on the next day landed Charles safely at Fécamp in Normandy. The wanderer, who had been for six weeks engaged in these adventures, and had been recognised by forty or fifty persons without being betrayed, did not again see England until he returned in the triumph of the Restoration.

Just within a century after the battle of Worcester another English prince had to play at hide and seek. In 1688 the only son of James the Second was born, a prince who lived to be known as the Pretender, and who made a few fruitless attempts to regain the throne which had been denied to his father. The seventy-seven years of his life were spent mostly abroad; and Mr. James Misfortune, as a Scottish writer quaintly called him, disappeared from the scene. His son, Prince Charles Edward, became known, for the sake of distinction, as the Young Pretender; and it is to him that so many romantic stories attach. Landing on a lonely part of the Inverness coast, in 1745, he collected a

small band of resolute and faithful adherents, and determined (in a spirit more heroic than prudent) to fight for the crown—hoping that his forces would grow in strength as he advanced. How he marched from the Western Highlands to Edinburgh, and captured it; how he won the battle of Preston Pans; how he pushed on to the very centre of England, and, turning north, marched back to Scotland; how he won another battle at Falkirk; and, finally, how his hopes were utterly crushed by the disastrous defeat at Culloden—are matters known to every reader of Scottish history.

The Young Pretender had his full share of disguising and hiding after these disasters had befallen him. The enormous sum of thirty thousand pounds was offered for his apprehension; but the faithfulness of the Highlanders to the unlucky Stuarts was proof against even this temptation. Clad in the humblest garb, he was sheltered for six weeks in South Uist, one of the most lonely of the Hebrides. Then, when the English authorities got an inkling of his lurking-place, he wandered from one island to another, crossing firths and straits at the imminent peril of his life. By far the most absorbing romance of his career was connected with Flora Macdonald, a heroine whom the world will not let die. The daughter of one of the chiefs of the clan Macdonald, she determined to aid the young prince to escape, at whatever hazard to herself. She dressed him up in the linen gown, apron, and coif of Betty Burke, an Irish girl in search of work as a spinner. Flora and this assumed Betty made a perilous voyage by night from South Uist to Skye, meeting many boats filled with soldiers in search of the fugitive prince, and narrowly escaping detection. When in Skye, the masculine stride of Betty Burke set some persons wondering who the strapping damsels could be. Shortly afterwards the prince exchanged this garb for a Highland male attire. Flora Macdonald conducted him safely to the presence of other faithful adherents, who received him, guarded him, disguised him, and concealed him, until he was at length enabled to effect his escape to France. Pity that Charles Edward, the "Bonnie Prince Charlie" of song and story, did not show himself more worthy of such fidelity!

Were we to notice the hide and seek tribulations of foreign emperors, kings, and princes, this article would spread to un-

manageable dimensions; we confine ourselves to our own land, or at least our own royal personages, as illustrative examples.

REGIMENTAL NICKNAMES.

THERE are few regiments in the British service to which a soubriquet, occasionally bad, is not attached, recalling some reminiscence of its origin, some peculiarity in its dress, or some incident memorable in its career. Private Thomas Atkins is proud and fond of these titles—unrecognised by the Army List—often prouder and fonder of them than of those which legitimately belong to his corps, and are accredited to it in official print; and sticklers for tradition hold that these titles should not be allowed to fall into oblivion. Mayhap they are right; though it might be rank treason to say so above a whisper, now that brigade depots have been substituted for the county recruiting centres; now that local ties have been severed, as in the case of that poor Twenty-fourth, so sadly maltreated at Isandula, which, though called the Second Warwickshire, has its nursery in Mid-Wales; and now that civilian reformers are improving even the very buttons and badges off the tunics of our glorious Line. These little tokens cost much blood to gain, and mean much to the man accustomed to wear them. It is a pity that they should be done away with. Tommy does not like to be reduced to a cipher; he is not so madly in love with the Prussian system of flattening out regiments to an undistinguishable sameness, that he burns to rub away the insignia on his pouch, and dye his facings the exact tint of his uniform. He has, too, much individuality in him; and this individuality, transmitted to the regiment which is his, makes what military leaders admire as *esprit de corps*. He likes to gossip over the doings of the gallant Onetenonth in guard-room in the garrison, and by camp-fire in the field, and to tell the newly-joined recruit what great things the regiment did in other days, where this honour was won, and what that emblem signifies.

Tommy clings to the pet names, and when he meets a former comrade of the regimental family, he prefers to hail him by the pet name—there is more of brotherly familiarity in it—that is, when the name has not been given by way of derision. Some such exist; but you are not recom-

mended to betray your acquaintance with them if you wish to be a welcome guest in the mess-room. For instance, it would be considered “excessively bad form” to remind Anak of the First Life Guards of the blue-blooded fogies who sneered at a certain body of cavalry as Cheeses, and turned up their noses at the idea of accepting a commission in it; alleging that, after being remodelled in 1788, it was no longer composed of gentlemen, but of cheesemongers. Nor would it do to call the King’s Dragoon Guards the Trades Union, or the Nineteenth Hussars the Dampies. The names would hardly apply now, though once they might, as there is many a tall fellow in the light horse, and those in the heavies know little of strikes or striking, except what they learn in the riding-school.

Some of the nicknames of our regiments are borrowed from the uniform or facings; some, in the mounted branch, from the colour of the horses, and some from the patronymics of former colonels. Thus, the Royal Horse Guards are more generally known as the Blues; the Third Foot, as the Buffs; the Seventeenth, as the Lilywhites; the Fifty-first, as the Brickdusts; the Fifty-sixth, as the Pompadours (the facings being purple—the favourite hue of Madame de Pompadour); and the Fifty-eighth as the Black Cuffs. The Second Dragoon Guards is commonly called the Bays; and the Seventh, the Black Horse; while the Second Dragoons is more famous as the Scots Greys. The Third Hussars was once known as Lord Adam Gordon’s Life Guards, from that officer having detained it so long in Scotland when he commanded there; the Fourth Hussars, as Paget’s Irregular Horse, on account of its loose drill on its return from India after the former Afghanistan war; and the Seventeenth Lancers, as Bingham’s Dandies, from its colonel, Lord Bingham, causing the men’s uniforms to fit so well. But the Seventeenth are more attached, as well they may be, to their appellation of the Death or Glory Boys.

Taking up the roll of the British Army, it will be interesting to go through it seriatim, noting such regiments as have acquired soubriquets, and giving the reasons, where known, for which they were granted. The Fourth Dragoon Guards was called the Blue Horse on account of their facings, as the Fifth is called the Green. The Sixth, be it spoken in accents low, is sometimes designated, for obvious cause,

Tichborne's Own. The Seventh has been known indifferently as the Black Horse, because of its facings, and as the Virgin Mary's Guard ; but its more popular pseudonym is the Straw Boots. The Seventh Hussars rejoices in the title of the Old Saucy Seventh, a souvenir of its reputation in the Peninsula. Another Peninsular nickname is that of the Cherry Pickers, bestowed on the Eleventh Hussars, from some of the men having been captured by the French while despoiling a fruit-garden. The trim sabreurs of this corps are likewise recognised as the Cherubim. The Twelfth Lancers are more fortunate, in being styled the Supple Twelfth ; but the Thirteenth Hussars are quite as conceited over the inelegant epithet of the Ragged Brigade, for their clothing was frayed, not so much by slovenliness as by downright hard work. During the terrible struggle in the early part of the century they were present in thirty-two affairs, besides general actions, and lost two hundred and seventy-four men and over a thousand horses. The Royal Engineers are dubbed the Mudlarks, from their beaver-like work in sap and parapet-making. One regiment of the brigade of Guards, the Grenadiers, is blessed or cursed with a by-name. It is yclept the Sand Bags and also Old Eyes. But surely the First Foot carries away the palm from all its fellows, for it insists on its antiquity in proclaiming itself Pontius Pilate's Body Guard. Kirke's Lambs, from its badge of the paschal lamb and the name of its colonel from 1682 to 1691, is the nom de guerre of the Second ; but the regiment is not so anxious to own that it was stigmatised as the Sleepy Queen's, from its carelessness at Almeida in allowing Brennier to slip through its fingers. The Buffs are called in addition the Nutcrackers and the Resurrectionists, from having reappeared at Albuera after having been scattered by the Polish lancers. The Fourth are the Lions, from their badge ; the Fifth—as well as the Fourteenth—the Old and Bold, from their courage, and the Shiners from their neatness ; the Sixth, the Saucy Sixth ; and the Ninth, the Holy Boys, from their thirsty impiety in having bartered Bibles for commissariat rum in their wild fighting days in Spain. The Tenth are the Springers—a name common to the Sixty-second ; the Eleventh, the Bloody Eleventh, in remembrance of Salamanca, where they were chopped to mincemeat ; while the Fourteenth was

humorously distinguished as Calvert's Entire, from its having three battalions when commanded by a colonel of that name. The Seventeenth is nicknamed the Bengal Tigers, from its badge ; the Twentieth, the Two Tens ; the Twenty-second, the Two Twos ; and the Welshmen of the Twenty-third the Nanny Goats, from the custom of one of those well-known Alpine climbers being kept on the regimental strength, and being led before the band on the march. The brave but luckless Twenty-fourth are known as Howard's Greens, from their grass-green facings and the name of an officer who led them for twenty years in the last century. It is a popular fallacy to imagine that the Twenty-eighth borrow their designation of the Old Braggs from the exhibition of a spirit of boasting or braggadocio. Bragg was their colonel from 1734 to 1751, whence the soubriquet. They are also known as the Slashers, but wherefore is uncertain. Some authorities believe they got their title from their dash at the passage of the River Bronx, in the American War of Independence ; others say it arose from a party of the officers having disguised themselves as Indians, and having cut off the ears of a magistrate who had refused quarters to the women of the regiment during a trying winter. The Thirty-first are denominated the Young Buffs, having been mistaken for the Third at the Battle of Dettingen. The whimsical cognomen of the Havercake Lads is conferred on the Thirty-third, from a habit of the Serjeant Snaps of the corps to entice recruits by displaying an oat-cake spitted on their swords. The Thirty-fifth used to be termed the Orange Lilies ; the Thirty-sixth, the Saucy Greens ; the Thirty-eighth the Pump and Tortoise, on account of their sobriety and the slowness of their movements when stationed once at Malta ; and the Thirty-ninth, Sankey's Horse, from the circumstance of their having been once mounted on mules on a forced march when commanded by Colonel Sankey ; they are also called the Green Linnets, from their pea-green facings. A punning version of its number, XL, namely, the Excellers, is fixed on the Fortieth. The renowned Forty-twa retains its designation of the Black Watch, the independent Scotch companies from which it was formed having been so called on account of their dark tartans. The phrase, Light Bobs, marks out the Forty-third, albeit it is claimed by all light infantry

soldiers. The Forty-fourth swell with natural vanity over their distinction as the Old Stubborns, gained in the Peninsula. The classical epithet of the Lacedemonians was an alias of the Forty-sixth, a pedantic officer having harangued his brave boys on the beauties of Spartan discipline while shot and shell were flying round. It would be hard to discover the Forty-seventh under its cognomen of the Cauliflowers; and assuredly no friend of the gallant Fifty-first would ever dream of referring to it either as the Blind or the Dirty Half Hundred. Similar to the Excellers in the mode of origin of their soubriquet are the Kolis, as the Fifty-first are called from the initials of the title, King's Own Light Infantry. "Die hard, my men, die hard," cried the heroic Inglis to the Fifty-seventh, at Albouera, and ever since the plucky West Middlesex is the Die Hards. Why the Sixty-third should be burdened with such a grim by-name as the Bloodsuckers one is puzzled to conjecture. Prettier is the Faithful Durhams, designing the Sixty-eighth; as coarse, but more explicit, the Pigs, designing the stout Seventy-sixth, who bear an elephant for badge—was it the artist's fault, or was it ignorance of zoology in spectators, that the monarch of Ceylon forests was mistaken for a porker?—but surely a schoolboy brain was at work when the figures on the shakoos of the Seventy-seventh were twisted into the Poothooks. The Seventy-eighth Highlanders are the King's Men, from their Gaelic motto—Cuidich'n Righ (Help the King); the Eightieth, the Staffordshire Knots; the Eighty-fifth, the Elegant Extracts; the Eighty-seventh, the Old Fogs or the Faugh-a-Ballagh Boys, from their Irish war-cry of Fag an Bealach—"clear the way"—at Barossa; and the Eighty-eighth, the Devil's Own Connaught Boys, from their troublesomeness to friend and enemy. The Eighty-ninth were nicknamed Blayney's Bloodhounds, from their eagerness in tracking Irish insurgents, but we would much rather salute them as the Rollickers. When the Ninety-fourth was raised at Glasgow, the Garvies—"sprats," so called from an island in the Firth of Forth near which they are caught—was the piece of slang contempt flung at it, so emaciated were the laddies that poured into its awkward squads. The regiment is mostly composed of Irishmen now, and the recruits no longer resemble Pharaoh's lean kine. To their sky-blue facings, not to any association with China, do the

mortals of the Ninety-seventh owe their exalted appellation of the Celestials; and to their rough and ready style of going into action at the siege of Delhi without their tunics is due to the Hundred-and-first the by no means dishonourable name of the Dirty Shirts. As hats are doffed to the Sweeps and the Jollies—the active and intrepid lads of the Rifle Brigade and the Marine Light Infantry—our review of regimental nicknames closes.

THE YOUNG DEAF AND DUMB, AT LESSONS.

WHEN little scholars can hear when they are spoken to, and can speak when their teachers want to hear; when little scholars, ticking at their slates, or swinging back their feet into the enticing area underneath a form, can be silenced by a "Tch!" and brought into motionlessness by a tap upon a desk; the science of teaching them has been submitted to so many experiments, that the application of it has very nearly reached perfection.

When little scholars, however, have no power to hear when they are spoken to, and no power to speak when their teachers want to hear; when little scholars are "nudging" their elbow-to-elbow companions into open exasperation, or tipping them right off their seats into that just-mentioned enticing form-area altogether; and they are yet never to be silenced by the shrillest admonition ever uttered, and never to be recalled to propriety by the best-levelled ferule or regulation "pointer" in the world; experiments upon them have been nothing like so plentiful, and things are changed. It is absurd to hope that a word to one is a word to a whole schoolful; it reaches none. It is absurd to hope that a lesson carefully once said is out and over; the carefulness of it is a blank to all. So is it absurd to hope that a gentle hint somewhere will work better reformation than a straight command all round; for hints are emptiness, example (of tone or style) a waste. And there comes up the question, what about the science of teaching such little scholars then?

To grasp it, let the condition of a deaf and dumb child, its young experience, its small attainments, be considered. Alas, it has no experience—from the stand-point of such experience being groundwork for the accepted routine of education; it has no attainments. It has never heard its mother's lullaby—that soft crooning that begins its

work, in the earliest days, on baby-ears, to teach the quieting influence of gentleness and hushing. It has never heard babies near about itself, its kin, or its companions, coin its baby-name and baby-toys into baby-talk and chatter; getting initiation that way into knowledge and endearment that never loses its close association. It has never known the sanctity of a baby-prayer, the tenderness of a baby-whisper; nor the merriment of a baby-song and rhyming, of baby-fun, that make up, all of them, the higher half of baby-life, and are the best of preparation for lifting the little mind and memory to higher efforts still. Nor has it had the power to relate its little terrors, its little fears, its hesitations, its efforts, its ambitions; its conviction after arguments kindly pressed, its surrender when unwillingness was still strong with it, and doubts were not a bit removed; its consciousness, at times, that reproof had been given undeserved, its resolve, at others, never to incur reproof again. Then there is a deaf and dumb baby's inability to show what it knows, or what it fails to know, of a tithe of the objects it has seen; there is its debarment, thus, from demanding an object again if it wants it, and it is not in sight to be pointed at, or of the sort to be described by signs; its debarment, too, from describing how its little soul has been impressed, and from meeting with the sympathy it would be met with if this keen impression could be conveyed. And there is not only the isolation that all this is, of itself—the dreariness, the baldness and bareness; there is the total cutting-off it implies from entrance on the avenues that lead, no matter with what baby-steps and tottering at the commencement, to the successful attack of higher things. For the child in whom is lacking all this delicacy of definition is the child who must be lacking, eventually, in accuracy, in attention, in wide speculation, in clear discovery; for the child who has never felt the strong tie of confidence, or of trust, or obedience, or self-renunciation, is the child who can never recognise things as they stand when they are massed—the abstract. And is it thought, on the first blush, that these faculties (to which only too many, as is manifest, could too easily be added) are over-lofty to be found in an infant, to use the scholastic term, or in a child, to come down to the familiar naming? If so, the tree is not traced back to the small seed from which it had

its spring. This shall be demonstrated. A child who cannot be told (by lip, because he cannot hear; by gesture, because it is impossible), "You may not have this toy to-day, it is put away for next week," is not only unable to be told this much, but is unable to have the distinction explained to it between the abstract sense of now and of then; and when the common circumstances of living (such as the expected recurrence of meals, of sleeping, of waking, and so on) have given a deaf and dumb child the perception, from its own experience, that some things are being absolutely had, at the moment, and some are going to be had in a period by-and-by, the child cannot disclose that it perceives this much, or that it comprehends that there are short futures, which will come, say, at the completion of a task, and long futures, as far distant as a season of the year. Again, for an example that shall hit things that have a different scope: The child that cannot have conveyed to it, by means of words or actions it can understand, that buttercups are called golden, and sister's curly locks called golden also, or better still, that sister has a little golden head, not for the reason that each is made of gold, as doctor's heavy watch-chain is, or mother's wedding-ring, but for the reason that each has some of the blaze of yellowness and brilliance to be seen, in a different force, in the precious metal, is a child that will never get to the path that will enable it to form such phrases as "gems of thought," as "a chain of circumstances," as an "adamantine will." Finally, a child unable to be told that he may pluck a rose from a rose-branch overhanging his own side of a garden-wall, but, according to strict law, may not pluck a rose, though it is on the same tree, if it is growing as little as an inch on the side that is part of the premises of his neighbour, is a child unable to arrive, eventually, at the comprehension of nice discrimination in the application of treaties, of covenants, of agreements; is a child unable to decide as to the rights of nations and individuals, as to other uttermost and delicate principles involved in the highest moral and political decrees.

And now, surely, it is time to ask the grave and deeply compassionate question: Is it any wonder that the deaf and dumb are looked upon, very very often, as only half-endowed with brain-power? Since they are here, alive, with all means of ingress into their minds, of egress from their minds, limited to coarse, that is, to

unmistakable gesture (such as hands raised, for pity; hands and head fallen, for shame; food seized, if there be hunger; treasures concealed, if it be desired they should not be taken away), it follows that they must be, perforce, deficient in brain-power, must be, perforce, what they were born—babies; with babies' aims; with babies' methods; with all growth, except that purely of the body, arrested at that baby-period, and thoroughly incapacitated from getting a stroke beyond. As they cannot be approached—it is a truism—they cannot give out; as their wits (the word is good; it shall be used) cannot be seized or grappled, their wits are fain to lie by, idle and weakened. Bred with other children, the deaf and dumb, if these other children are gentle-mannered, will be gentle-mannered also; if these other children are headstrong, slatternly, artful, and ungovernable, the deaf and dumb will be headstrong, slatternly, artful, and ungovernable, the same. For the rest, unless mothers have the leisure to watch every manifestation of their afflicted children and stop it or encourage it as is required, and have the leisure to give baby-lessons (practically, physically; such as counting baby-toes and fingers, and counting buttons or cakes to match, for recognition; at the same time, setting down figures for proper, ready, and scholastic association); and unless mothers further have the leisure to point from things to their representative words, and from pictures to their words, and from persons to their words, putting short words to connect them, such as Tom and John, as the two stand together, and so on; and have the leisure to do this, patiently and perpetually, for the first years of a child's life, enabling it, this way, to learn some part of what a hearing baby in its growth up to becoming a hearing scholar learns with its little voice and ears, unconsciously, of itself; then, it must be maintained, every such an afflicted little baby can only remain an afflicted little baby, no matter how many years it has been fed and clothed and tended. Then, it must be maintained, does such an afflicted little baby go into school entirely unprepared for school, with all standards, sections, classes, rules, by-laws, that have been framed for children who cannot help receiving some elementary instruction every minute in the day, thrown into helpless confusion and anarchy, and utterly unhinged and out of application.

If it be established, this—and possibly

it required no illustration, only there was the necessity, for the present purpose, of bringing it into mind—it accounts for the education of the very young deaf and dumb (those under nine years of age) never having been undertaken publicly in England at all, till the Rev. W. Stainer, comparatively recently, saw the urgent need of such an undertaking, and originated those labours that are effecting so much of the good that was his desire. Seconding, or, as it were, keeping abreast of his efforts, is some good newly-commenced action from the School Board for London. This body, standing committed, as it does, to see that the poor children of the metropolis are schooled, whether they can speak, or whether they cannot speak, has established four deaf and dumb Centres, under the superintendence of Mr. Stainer, one each for the north, south, east, and west districts. This body is endeavouring, thus, to place the instruction it can give within reach of all corners of the metropolis; it has gathered together, in these four Centres, a total of one hundred and thirty-four scholars; the lowest number, twelve, being at the west Centre, the highest number, fifty-six, at the east; it is giving fair trial to both the advocated methods of deaf and dumb communication, namely: that by signs and finger-spelling, called the dactyl, and that by the lip and throat, called the oral; and this new and momentous fact makes it a national, or, at any rate, a taxpayer's enquiry: Has the philosophic method of touching or getting at the young deaf and dumb yet been searched for and discovered? To judge, it is best to see; to judge, it is best that some deaf and dumb teaching should be carefully watched and considered; and the East Deaf and Dumb Centre of the School Board, at the Wilmott Street Schools, Bethnal Green, shall be visited, when, to a more or less extent, judgment can be formed.

On our entrance we come upon a little room with about two dozen little scholars in it. They are seated at desks in the usual manner; they are displaying (also in the usual manner) every variety of childish characteristic. For a few instances, here is a little girl, clean and gentle, with delicately-refined features, lifting the hand of another girl sitting beside her to get her to feel her hot-red cheeks; here is the indignation of a dilatory boy, when his sharp neighbour sees that his pencil is being motioned for, and snatches it up from his flat slate for him; here is the extra speed

of another boy, who dives after a pencil that has rolled and dropped ; here is the military imitativeness of a third, who stalks off, when marching-time comes, the very burlesque of a Hector ; here is the fighting disposition of a burly youngster, who hits with heat and vigour at another ; and here is the watchful humanity of a child onlooking, who holds up his hand to attract the teacher, that the hitting, with proper authority, may be corrected and brought to an end. Turning to the course of instruction of these poor scholars, it comprises Kindergarten amusements ; drill exercises—such as hands up, hands out, hands behind, hands fluttering, and so on, in exact imitation of the action of the teacher ; it comprises drawing on slates, writing on slates (or in copy-books, if old enough to be entrusted with pen and ink), numerals, and articulation. A collective drawing-lesson being about to commence ("collective," meaning a lesson given to all the little divisions of the little school alike), the teacher has massed her little flock before her at their desks, gives each a small bundle of Kindergarten sticks and a slate and pencil, chalks on a black-board the form the children are to put their little sticks into, and then leaves them to put them, and afterwards to make a drawing of how they have been put. The whole is so simple, it barely deserves the art-appellation of drawing, however much it may be the real first step that must be footed to mount to that that lies at the head of the whole flight. Yet, simple as it is, it tasks several of these young deaf and dumb scholars to the utmost, leaving about as many of them wrong as right, when their little exercise is concluded. The lesson is excellent, however ; since, through the most easily available part of these poor children, their eyes, it gets to their imitativeness, their obedience (which is discipline), their neatness (which is accuracy), their power of concentration ; and since it is a lesson that places them on an exact equality with hearing-children, and which they could receive, if occasion required (and possibly to their great advantage) at the same time with the hearing-children. The writing-lessons that follow are good, also ; they, too, bringing in their wake imitativeness, neatness, a certain amount of discipline and concentration ; and since the finest sense of hearing would not make writing a whit worse or better, nor would the most delicate and musical speech. And also,

and for many of the same reasons, are all of the physical exercises profitable. To begin them, the teacher stamps her foot upon the floor, vibrating it, which the children feel. This secures each one's close attention ; and then their affliction does not hinder them from folding their little arms when the teacher folds hers ; from rolling their little arms round, wheel-way ; from leaping out from their benches, at a sign ; from leaping back again, at another sign ; from sitting ; standing ; turning at a wave of the pointer ; facing ; turning once more ; clapping ; bowing ; sitting ; standing again ; from marching, as the teacher points, right through the opened door, straight into the play-ground, for five minutes' play. Once at their play, though, and the poor children's deafness and muteness are sadly prominent again. There is no shout of joy from them at meeting the open air ; there is only the jump of it. There is no linked ring of little people, instantaneously formed, dancing round to the rhythm of a merry doggrel song. Yet there is life, happily ; and a world of young delight. This is shown in the mounting of little fellows swiftly on to other little fellows, for a gay trot off round the ground, pig-a-back ; in the touch and race between child and child ; in the efforts to climb a post or column ; in the quick extrication of a ball from a jacket-pocket, for a high toss ; in the rapid disappearance of a whole score behind a colonnade, that yet brings their deafness into touching realisation again, when the teacher cannot have recourse to bell or whistle to call them in, but is compelled to go round for individual collection, and to drive back one little laggard after another, to take its place, for orderly re-marshalling, against the school-room wall.

After this, there can be no school-song, however, for further recreation. The poor scholars cannot sing ; the poor scholars cannot hear any other scholars sing ; and the art of talking to the deaf and dumb has not yet had sufficient literary attention drawn to it for there to have been any song-substitutes invented, stringing innocence and nonsense into metre of another fashion, merely to interest and to amuse. It is a blank, this ; though it can scarcely remain for long so, with the Government, i.e. the country, involved as it is being shown that it is involved, and with this fact the best warrant for stimulus to invention and good remedy. Of object lessons there can be none, either ; since, if

a teacher were to hang an object, or a picture, up, there would be no means of asking the young and uninstructed deaf and dumb to define its hardness, softness, value, danger, grace, or plain utility. Then there can be no school-geography, for the same reason; there can be no spelling; there can be no reciting. There is nothing left, indeed, but the absolute oral teaching; and when that is reached, the crucial point is there, and it can scarcely be watched and witnessed without anxiety and without pain.

The teacher takes a boy-scholar to stand beside her, and points to a letter of the alphabet on a book lying on her desk; then she catches up the child's small hands, and holds one of them to her throat, and the other to her lips.

"A," she brings out, with well-drilled force, with the utmost movement of which the utterance of the sound is capable. "A," she repeats, twice or thrice more, for better recognition. And then she rapidly transfers the boy's hands from her lips and throat to his own, repeats her prodigious letter, and nods and smiles to get the poor young scholar on to imitation.

There is a result, certainly. "Aa-aa-aa," is jerked out, after awhile, in a feeble, sad, slow length, and in a thin and tuneless treble, the depth of piteousness.

It is taken to be success, though, considering the wonder of getting sound out of muteness, the few weeks there has been any endeavour to get sound out of this poor boy's muteness at all; and the teacher proceeds.

"B," she says, raising the child's hands to feel her throat and lips again, and again rapidly putting them up to his own. "B, B;" her emphasis enormous, her expenditure of her own strength lavish, her patience and earnestness touching.

The reward is less than before. "Wa-aa-aa-as," is all of it; long, like a lamentation; toneless, aimless, unconveyable.

Alas! But the teacher knows there is likely to be failure, and she simply becomes more patient, more full of emphasis, more intent on her great big B, as she shuts her eyes, and shakes her head, and snatches up the small hands again to herself, that they may feel.

She gets something like a B out of her scholar, at last; she pats him on the shoulder encouragingly, she smiles and points to F.

It is only Wa-aa-aa again; thinner still, more pitifully; a second lamentation.

"No, no! Not waa-waa!" the teacher is stirred to, in repetition. "Not waa-waa! Efffff!" And she blows with an intensity that makes the poor child, with his intent eyes fixed upon her, produce "Ef," then, very fairly, and be taken backwards in triumph to letter E.

It is again Aa-aa, however, or it is near to Aa-aa, or near to some other heart-rending moan or woe-cry; and there is all of the patience to be repeated, there are the hands changing places again, there is the teacher mouthing and struggling to bring out an Ee-ee-e that shall have imitable action, and lead the scholar to fit conclusion.

He is led, eventually, and other letters follow. One of them is K, which is a hard, iron Ker, voiceless, as the boy puts it a long way off from his mournful and final Aa-aa. One of them is D, which is a hard, iron Der, voiceless again, no nearer the elongated and grievous Ee-eer. Another of them is M, which is a terrible battle between lip and lip before there is courage to let them part. And another of them is Z, which is all an inward breathing, as the poor child grasps at his own throat, and feels at his own lips, helping his anxious utmost to do as he is bid. As a whole, it is painfulness that is not diminished when the poor young scholar is sent back to his desk, his instruction over, and when he continues his efforts voluntarily, showing them to one or two school-fellows next him, and he and they, all, grasp their own throats and lips as they sit, and moan and jerk out their poor burlesques of letters, proudly.

Besides this, too, there is more of the same sort when the teacher beckons up the eldest division of her little children, numbering four, and clusters it round a black-board. On this she has chalked a few such short words as woman, mat, lamp, paper; on it she has hung a picture-sheet representing the articles she has named; and each child is to "articulate" all of the letters of one of the chalked words, is to say it as a whole, is to find the picture of it. There come good letters—dub-bel-u, for instance; o, which is excellent; h, and p; there come bad letters—hard g, and z; there is a fair word—sofa is one, let is another; there are words that go back to the soulless Wa-aa-aa, and that, for all word purposes, are absolutely useless and unintelligible.

Let the oral lesson of numerals be noted also. For this there has been an effectual rubbing-out of the chalk words from the

board, and in their place the teacher has written, clearly, the names of figures up to twenty, and has hung up, underneath them, a ball and rod calculating frame, bright in its masses of attractive colour. The first boy is to watch the teacher's mouth as she says, voicelessly, "One;" he is to say it after her; to point to the figure and the word of it; to work one ball along the rod, to show that he understands. Pause shall come here—it will be but a moment—to note how the teacher, being an oral teacher, has been obliged to settle the spelling difficulty on her black-board peremptorily, according to oral law. One is one, in her bold fair writing, to be sure; but, underneath, in spirited phonetic fashion, there are the letters w-u-n. Then, two is two, to be sure; but, in an audacious parenthesis, the misleading w is discarded, and the word stands "too." The other revolutionary suggestions are "for" as the real method of four; "fiv" as five; "at" as eight; "nin" as nine; "twen-te" as twenty. In the Lord's Prayer, also (taught by writing to the first division), temptation is doubled by parenthesis into "tem-ta-shun," lead into "led," come into "com," and so forth. A sword and a Gordian knot come into the mind; phonetics are amusingly traced back to the deaf and dumb (the one is suited to the other, of a certainty); my lords and commons, philology and sweet habit and tradition are looked upon as being outwitted thus, on Board School premises, in very quiet and unsuspected fashion, all rules, analogies, and affections notwithstanding. But to the lesson.

"Thor-ee" is pronounced silently for the deaf and dumb scholars by their teacher, as she points to a mild three. "Taw-wel-ver," she goes on to, with the same vigour and intensity, for twelve; and she blows hard for the "f" of a four, and yawns hard for the "or" of it; and she performs every vehement facial and labial and guttural contortion that conscientiousness and understanding and determination can invent, to give her deaf and dumb pupils, as she points from figure to figure, some tangible acquisition and enticement. And the end? Well, in the end she has presented to her a suv-vun-tun like protracted sobs; a faw-tun, having a long resonance of the tun-n-n to disqualify it; a good twenty; a good five; a good six; she has all of the other figures just aw-aw, baw-waw, a one not to be known from a nine, a two not to be known from a ten, the

outcome neither comprehended nor comprehensible.

To come at last to the pity of it, there is a passage in the little Christmas story, *The Battle of Life*, which it will be well to let have short quotation:

"Clemency Newcome," the book says, "made some eager signs to her husband and moved her mouth as if she were repeating with great energy, one word or phrase to him, over and over again. As she uttered no sound, and as her dumb motions were of a very extraordinary kind Mr. Britain followed her pantomime with looks of deep amazement and perplexity—followed the motions of her lips, guessed, half aloud, 'milk and water,' 'monthly warning,' 'mice and walnuts,' only became conscious of her meaning when she cried out at last, almost in a shriek, 'Mr. Michael Warden.'"

It is the best illustration that can be given of oral teaching to the young deaf and dumb in a board-school. It is the best illustration, it is very much to be feared, that can come of any oral teaching to any deaf and dumb, in any school, anywhere. Not that there must be any misunderstanding about this statement. As a fact, words can be produced by the deaf and dumb; they were heard in Wilmott Street. As a fact, sentences can be produced by the deaf and dumb; they were heard in Wilmott Street, though not from a child. As a fact, the deaf and dumb can watch a speaker's lips, and be able to tell what he is saying, as was seen in Wilmott Street, also; and the successful efforts of Mr. Van Praagh and others, in all of these directions, are far too well-known for any denial of accomplishment to be possible, even if such a denial were desired. But, when these words and sentences are produced, ordinarily, by anybody, anywhere, on casual occasions, is it a certainty that it can be told what they are? Also, when an ordinary speaker's lips are watched, on casual occasions, by anybody, anywhere, is it a certainty that the watcher will be able to read them rightly? Of this last enquiry, proof can be obtained at the easiest. Let any person "mouth" a sentence to another, and there it will be. Michael Warden will often be just as much mice and walnuts, monthly warning is just as likely to be mistaken for milk and water; evidence, surely, that the best trained deaf and dumb could not be present at an ordinary sermon, an ordinary lecture, an ordinary dramatic performance,

and be able to glean anything in the world about it ; evidence, surely, that mouthing, after all, must be very slow, very distinct, absolutely special — since all persons do not "mouth" alike, and since the movements, for instance, of the mouths of men who wear moustaches cannot be seen at all. And, to go back to the first of these two enquiries, proof came of it even at the Wilmott Street School itself ; where a child was asked her name, and the only sound that came, even with her pleased and smiling endeavour, was, "Wha-y Wha-y." Which was evidence, surely, that though some deaf and dumb may have well-formed vocal ability, and can be readily trained to be heard and fairly understood, this vocal ability is as exceptional as the gift of song, and can no more be created by training than a music-teacher can create a singing voice in a pupil who has only a hoot or a wheeze.

For all of which, where the vocal gift is, it will here be very quickly conceded that it should be cultivated to the full. It can be tested for by mothers (just as the patient teacher at Wilmott Street was testing for it) long before a child is old enough for schooling ; and, by all manner of means, let the afflicted be lifted out of their affliction, even though it can only be a few of the afflicted, and if it can only be done partially. But, let the world be open to the fact that there is certain to be important outcome, in time, from this new experiment of Deaf and Dumb Centres among the Board Schools of London. The complete circle of knowledge on this point has not yet been described, whether on the oral or the dactyl system. And it will be wise as well as interesting to look forward searchingly to the future.

MY LAND OF BEULAH.

A STORY IN FIFTEEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

BLACK-WINGED rooks sailing across the blue sky, and cawing lazily as they go ; a wide expanse of fields, not level fields, but fields that are like small hills, extending and undulating far away to the left. Peeping up above the farthest one, the square tower of Bromley Church, a very jack-in-the-green of a tower, that the ivy has clasped and clung to, leaving nothing but the clock face visible.

Sweetly ring out the chimes from that old church tower on a Sunday evening, and I have a childish fancy that my friends the rooks hush their cawing to listen.

You must please to understand that I, a small, very small child, am supposed to be standing in the wide old-fashioned garden of Summerfield and telling you of these things. The trees above me are so tall, that in trying to watch therein the gymnastics of the rooks and their large and ever increasing families, I have more than once fallen ignominiously backwards on the soft green grass, and with an inward conviction that the impudent birds are laughing at me, had to scramble to my feet in no pleasant frame of mind.

Summerfield stands well back from the high road, along which, in the days that my memory is now recalling, stage-coaches ran to and fro between London and our county town. The carriage-drive from the big white gates upon this road slopes gradually down to the dear old-fashioned, irregularly-built house, that belongs to no particular style of architecture, but is full of delightful surprises in the way of unexpected gables, and casemented windows coming upon you unawares, just where it seems most unlikely that a window should be.

Bromley is the village, dominated by the church that I have already mentioned, and containing only one house of any pretensions at all, and that is the vicarage. The other tenements of the settlement are whitewashed cottages, with great black bars crossing them in every direction, and thatched roofs, whereon grow many lichens and a golden-green plant called house-leek, that — so I was informed — brought good luck to the inhabitants if it flourished, and boded evil if it withered away.

There is only one shop of any pretension in Bromley, and drawing upon the store of my personal recollections, I should say that steel pens, and sweetstuff of various kinds, were the chief merchandise therein displayed ; however, this seems improbable, therefore it may be that the nature of my own purchases flavours these reminiscences, and that Mr. Twinkler provided more substantial articles than those above named to the primitive inhabitants of Bromley village. Burglars cannot be a production of the country neighbourhood that I am trying to describe, for in summer-time the hall door of the old manor-house stands wide open "from early morn to dewy eve," and one can see the red and white roses bobbing their heads in the breeze round the doorway, and now and again flinging a shower of scented petals ever so far across the hall.

This hall, like all the rooms at Summerfield, is low and broad. On either side the door is a high, narrow window, arched at the top and filled in with coloured glass. The subject of the one on the right is the Prodigal's departure, that on the left that individual's return. In the first of these the hero of the story is setting out, with a jaunty step and self-confident air generally, to riot in the pleasures of the world; in the second, he is coming drooping home, while in the extreme corner stands the fatted calf, looking uncomfortably on at the preparations for his own decease. I remember wondering many times and oft why the Prodigal was depicted with a green face, and being so sorry for the solemn-faced calf, that I stood a tip-toe and tried to stroke it. Two huge carved chairs further ornament the hall, and between these is a low stand, whereon stands the golden cage of a grey parrot, reputed to be a traveller of vast experience.

No sooner does anyone enter the hall than Polly, with her head held knowingly on one side, questions them as to their intentions: "What d'ye want? What d'ye want?" and then, taking it for granted that their intentions are evil, adds promptly: "Fie, for shame! fie, for shame! Oh, you naughty girl!" If opportunity offers she then proceeds to ruffle her grey poll against the bars of her cage, looking up sideways in a most knowing manner, and saying suggestively: "Isn't it nice? Oh, Polly, isn't it nice? Ha, ha, ha!" This means that she would be glad to have her head gently scratched; a process during which she lolls out her black tongue in lazy rapture, and whispers hoarsely to herself: "Isn't it nice? Oh, Polly, isn't it nice?"

I can look back, as I write, and see myself, a small mite of five years old, in a dress so short and stiff that it stood out pretty nearly at right angles all round me, and a sash so large that I must have looked like a butterfly whose wings were too big for it, standing by Polly's cage, and trying ever so hard to solve the mystery of a bird being endowed with the power of speech. Then I see the little figure tripping onwards, stopping at a doorway on the right, pushing the door gently open, glancing admiringly at the reflection of a child with big brown eyes, a mane of hair to match tied back with a blue ribbon, and tiny feet with blue rosetted shoes, and so making its way into the wide bay-window, where sits a lady with drooping curls of mingled grey and black, bending over a work-frame.

"Is that you, Nellie?" says a kind, loving voice; while Polly outside, less affectionately inclined, calls out: "Fie, for shame! fie, for shame! Oh, you naughty girl!"

"I wonder who has left the door open?" says the worker at the frame; and with a penitent air I trot across the room and shut it close. Then I come back and climb up on to the seat that runs all round the window; not, however, until I have had a good stare at the sampler that is stretched tightly across the frame. It represents Elisha fed by the ravens. There is a marvellous background of shrubs and trees, all being done in the finest tent stitch; and beside a stone (in shades of orange) lies the recumbent figure of the prophet. A flock of birds, each laden with what is generally known as a "two-penny pan-loaf," are gracefully approaching from the left-hand corner of the canvas.

As I look upon this striking picture two ideas rise to the surface of my innocent mind.

"Dem do be my dee-ar rookses," pointing to the ravens. "Him haven't dot no node," pointing to the prophet. In fact, Elisha has two prominent eyes of the deepest cobalt blue, and a red stitch or two by way of mouth, but of nose hath he none.

To the sensitive mind of the worker my last remark savours of irreverence, and a grave look upon her gentle face makes me so conscious of some fault, that I am glad to creep away into the corner of the window-seat and leave the features of the good Elisha an open question.

It is summer-time. Could it have been always summer at that old manor-house, or is it that in the record of my memory the winter days have been forgotten, and only the happy sunshine of my child-life, and the scented air coming in from the rambling pleasure-where all old-fashioned flowers grow and flourish exceedingly, have made a lasting impression? I cannot tell. In each life is recorded the memory of some dear "Land of Beulah," where "they heard continually the singing of the birds, and saw every day the flowers appear on the earth," and where the air was "very sweet and pleasant;" and my Land of Beulah was, and ever has been, the many-gabled, rose-wreathed, ivy-clad home among the meadow-lands, called "Summerfield."

But I have drifted sadly from the little figure crouched upon the window-seat, and the grey-haired woman with

her sad dark eyes fixed upon the tapestry that grows beneath her deft fingers. It is summer-time: and I—happy, I scarce know why—am fain to draw a deep sigh of content, and sing a little song softly to myself as I look out upon the green upland lying in the glow of the sunlight, and the myriad daisies starring the lawn whereon Flick, the hairy terrier, rolls in an ecstasy, crushing their white flower-faces mercilessly. The wealth of roses, red, and white, and creamy yellow, peeping at me as they cluster round the open window, the cawing of the rooks in the tall fir-trees, and the gurgle of the thrushes in the hawthorns, all add to my content. A plump robin, too, hops along the walk, and after glancing at me with his round shining eyes, hides himself in a rose-bush, where his ruddy breast makes him look like a living rose among the green.

All these things give me a keen sense of happiness, child as I am, and added to them all are other secret and inner sources of delight. The Rev. Daniel Girdstone, Vicar of Bromley, and his sister, Miss Theodosia, are coming to drink tea at Summerfield this evening, and I am to share the festivities in the "best drawing-room." I have, in fact, donned my best sash and shoes in honour of the event; and I know that the steel-grey silk and large cameo brooch of my companion also mean company apparel and company manners. Mr. Girdstone is an old bachelor, with an old maiden sister of such grim and starched propriety of demeanour, that I constantly lose myself in speculations as to what effect the sudden overturning of the tea-pot on her best cabinet dress—ground invisible green, pattern apparently small orange-coloured beetles at distances—would have? I also tremble when I notice that Polly is not awed by Miss Girdstone's martial carriage and deep bass voice, but salutes her with the disrespectful adjuration: "Oh, you naughty girl!" just as if she were anyone else. When this happens I look to see some convulsion of nature take place; but Miss Girdstone only says, "Oh, what a rude bird!" and takes my hand in hers, to lead me away from possible contamination, I suppose.

Miss Girdstone's hand is not a comfortable hand to hold: it feels like a bundle of little sticks, and does not close on mine, but just lets itself be held. On one of these occasions, very much afraid, but still determined to put a bold face on matters,

I looked up at her, and said, the while my heart beat so fast I wondered it didn't unfasten my sash: "Why does your handy be so nassy, Miss 'Dosha?"

In thinking over this occurrence subsequently in the light vouchsafed by added years and experience, I have come to the conclusion that Miss Theodosia considered it the part of true dignity to ignore my unlucky remark altogether. At all events, I cannot remember that she took any notice of it, beyond putting on a stony stare that half frightened me out of my young wits, and ever afterwards caused me to connect the idea of the vicar's sister with a certain milliner's block in a little room upstairs—a hideous thing with vacant countenance and hairless scalp, used, as I afterwards discovered, for making up caps upon.

Again I am guilty of a divergence from the thread of my story; but it is a needful one, since it will explain the fact that sitting in the window-seat among the roses, in all the glory of my best sash and shoes, and happy in the glory of the summer-day outside, my joy held a dash of awe, as one who, having greatness thrust upon her, knew the consequences.

Still this cloud of dread, Miss Girdstone's grimness, and the trial of having to touch—perhaps hold in mine, who knows?—those wooden fingers, was one "with a silver lining," if so poetical an idea may be fitly used to indicate the conviction—founded on the evidence of my olfactory sense—that Sarah, the buxom cook of the establishment, had been baking cakes all day, and that the savoury results of her labour would presently appear on the round table that stood in the corresponding bay-window to the one in which I sat and meditated upon these things.

Of the vicar himself I had no fear; indeed, he and I were great friends. He was a little man, with a shining bald head, encircled by a fringe of grizzled curly locks. He had a way of putting this head on one side, and trying to look knowing when he said anything funny, that set me wondering whether, if I watched it, he would say, like Polly: "Isn't it nice? isn't it nice?" I think I knew that these thoughts savoured of irreverence, and would have been considered shocking by every well-regulated person, for I kept them to myself; as, indeed, I did many strange and weird imaginings that, I know now, were eerie guests for the chamber of a young child's heart.

Somehow, I know not how, it was borne in upon me in these days, that Mr. Girdstone enjoyed himself more thoroughly and unreservedly at our tea-table on the occasions when Miss Theodosia was "laid by," as she called it, with "her rheumatics." She always laid a personal claim to these mysterious ailments, and appeared to put on a certain air of distinction in doing so; once telling me that "they" had been in the Girdstone family for centuries.

Be this as it may, I was well assured that the kindly vicar told his old jokes, and repeated his old puns with a keener zest when his sister was absent from our weekly tea-drinkings, and I am ashamed to say that in my own mind I accused him of some hypocrisy in saying, as he greeted us: "Theodosia is mending nicely, I am glad to say."

Well, where was I?

Sitting in the window-seat in my best sash and shoes, watching the rooks sailing across the sky, and Flick rolling upon the daisies.

My companion is very silent. She has looked sadly all day. I know quite well that she often looks like that when she gets a letter from a country that is a long way off—the country Polly came from, Sarah says. Those letters cost a great deal of money, and things more precious than money, too, I know, for I have seen the tears roll down the face that is shaded by the grey ringlets, and fall upon the closely-written paper. More than this, I once came creeping in, and found her weeping—oh, how bitterly!—with her face hidden in her hands. The vicar was standing by her, speaking in that soft low voice of his, that is such a contrast to his sister's. When he saw me, he just lifted me in his arms, and carried me away—out into the sunshine in the garden. "See, Nellie, dear," he said, "gather the daisies, and make me a chain to take to a poor sick child over in the village—a little child that cannot play about like you." Now, looking furtively at the sad face bending over the work-frame, I call to mind that day. "Why," I think, "do the big, naughty letters come from the place where Polly used to live, and make Miss Mary sad and sorry, I should like to know?"

But, outside, a new claimant for my thoughts now appears; a big burly bee bumbling about among the roses, and buzz, buzz, buzzing, as he creeps into their open chalices, and drinks the nectar therein stored.

He is a beautiful fellow—barred gold and black—and the fancy takes me to prison him in one of the half-blown roses.

Quick of hand as of thought, I grasp rose and bee and all; and then, with a sharp cry of pain, draw back my hand, spring from my seat in the window, and fling myself, sobbing loudly, into the arms of my companion. At the first sound of my distress she has pushed back her frame, and now she cuddles me up against her breast, and tenderly touching the wounded hand that I thrust upon her notice, tries the old receipt of "kissing the place to make it well."

But my hurt is beyond kissing.

Not only has a cruel thorn torn my finger, but the insulted bee has stung my little pink palm, the pain of the wound increasing every moment, in a ratio with which the loudness of my lamentation keeps pace.

"My pet, my dearie!" croons the pitying voice in my ear. "Oh, the poor wee handie!" Then, as a figure, also in grey silk and a cameo brooch, is seen sauntering along the garden path, she bears me in her arms to the open window, and calls: "Sister Jane! Sister Jane! come to the child; a bee has stung her!"

What a fuss they make over me. How many cures they try to stay the burning of my wound!

As the smart moderates I yield myself up to the soft delight of being looked upon as an interesting sufferer.

I find the position delightful, and screw my little mouth up and cry, "Oh, oh!" thus drawing new drafts upon that exhaustless bank, the sympathy and tenderness of the two spectators. I do more than this, for with the ingenuity of my sex I take advantage of my position as an invalid, and sitting on Miss Mary's knee, overshadowed by the drooping ringlets that are bent above me, I take heart of grace, and pointing with my uninjured hand to the sketchy prophet, reiterate the irreverent comment made before:

"Him dot no node."

I look up in the face of my comforter with unabashed eyes. She can't scold me when the naughty bee has stung me so cruelly, and I am still now and then shaken by a sob.

She doesn't. She only silences my presuming lips with a kiss, while Sister Jane, standing by, actually smiles at my naughty ways.

Oh, dear and gentle friends, I look back

now across the vista of the years, and know that all your love and all your tender care given to a little motherless child is written in the Book of God, there entered by the Recording Angel with a smile upon his radiant face. For know, my reader, that Summerfield is no ancestral home of mine, but only my school, while Sister Mary and Sister Jane are only my school-mistresses. My lines had fallen to me in truth in pleasant places in that dear Land of Beulah, whither, in the weary days to come, my eyes looked back with tender love and longing.

Before the expected visitors arrive I have fallen asleep upon Miss Mary's lap, and soon upon my drowsy ear falls the unwelcome sound of a voice I know to be Miss Theodosia's :

"How you two do spoil that child!"

And then another voice—the voice that once bade me make the daisy-chain for the sick child—replies :

"Tut, tut, tnt! spoiling's good for little girls, isn't it, Miss Jane?"

CHAPTER II.

THERE is great sadness about the idea of a child that is motherless; but to me, Eleanor Maud Vansitart, otherwise called Nellie, this was not so. We cannot mourn over the loss of what we have never known, and as my mother gave her life for mine, I had no indistinct memories, like broken, fitful shadows in a pool, to look upon with yearning eyes. To me the word "mother" was a blank; and the clearest association in my mind with Hazledene, my father's place near the Cumberland coast, was of the big mastiff, Roland, with his drooping jowl, who ever so much taller than myself, represented to me a whole tribe of elephants, and more than once haunted my baby-dreams as a sort of avenging and pursuing monster.

Inconsolable at the loss of his young wife, my father for a time had seemed to forget—or rather, perhaps, shrank from remembering—the fact of my existence. But time, that soothes all sorrows, even against the will of the sufferer, soothed him, and he began to take a fond delight in his baby-girl. Being wise, as well as fond, he did not, when my mind began to open to those first impressions on which so much of the future character depends, leave me to the companionship of servants; but hearing of Summerfield, a school kept by three maiden sisters, the daughters of a clergyman, made due enquiries, visited the quaint old manor-house himself, and

then confided his treasure to the keeping of "the Misses Sylvester," as their school prospectus had it.

I have said that, like the Graces, they were three, Miss Maria, Miss Mary, and Miss Jane.

The first of these, why, I know not, was never called Miss Sylvester; but always "Miss Maria." She was stout and florid, with a hearty, bustling way of managing things in general, and a basket made of bonnet straw, and shaped like a boat, without which, never in the memory of man, had she been seen, save and except in church, at which times the basket, keys and all, was imprisoned in a certain cupboard. Miss Maria looked after the house-keeping, kept the accounts, took the arithmetic class, and superintended the "deportment" of the young ladies; beyond these matters her duties did not extend.

I must not, however, forget to say that, as a rule, she received any visitors who chanced to arrive at Summerfield, and was reported by our elder girls to have what they called "a fine manner." After having heard this comment I watched her closely and gravely, as is the manner of a child, but never discovered anything particularly "fine" about her, save and except a hearty, genial way of making people welcome, which I have since learnt to be the very "best" manner in the world.

I have already hinted that in my beautiful Land of Beulah dwelt that ghastly inmate of a household, a family skeleton; and it has always seemed to me, that at such times as he rattled his bones, and stalked abroad along the low broad galleries, haunting the dreams of those three sisters, the only shield they had against their terror of him was that close, indissoluble bond of love between them, that made the smallest sorrow of one the sorrow of all. Miss Maria wore spectacles, and had a bunch of little, stiff, round, snow-white curls on either temple. The spectacles had rims of gold, and I noticed that the eyes they covered had many times and oft red rims, too, on the days when the letter that cost so much postage came from the land that was honoured by being Polly's birthplace. Indeed, that astute bird herself had some connecting link with the family skeleton, for I once heard Miss Jane say, with the tears stealing down her face: "But then, remember, Sister Mary, he has good impulses, for he sent Polly to us, you know."

"Who has good impulses sometimes? Who sent Miss Polly over the sea in a

boat, I should like to know?" thought I to myself that day, as I gathered golden cowslips, and made them into balls that never would be round, but persisted in having nasty, square, uneven sides, as if they were badly-made boxes.

At that time I had been nearly two years at Summerfield, and considered myself quite an "old girl," so many new pupils had arrived since my first appearance.

When first papa brought me to my new home among the Cheshire hills I was a perfect mite of a thing. I was so small, that my dear instructresses had a board made to fit on to the side of my little bed, so that I might not fall out upon the floor with a crash in the night. I could not very well have managed to fall out on the other side of my bed, since it stood alongside Miss Mary's; indeed, sometimes, beset with those childish fears that come and go in the misty realms of sleep, I used to crawl across into her bed, and fall asleep encircled by her arm. It was delightful to wake up in the morning, and investigate the mysteries of the little three-cornered paper cases in which she was wont to prison each one of the grey ringlets, and pin it there with a hair-pin.

Miss Theodosia might well say those dear ladies "spoilt me sadly."

I was at times imbued with the very spirit of mischief; as on the never-to-be-forgotten occasion upon which, awaking one summer morning with the earliest little birds that began to twitter under my window, I stole out of my cot into the long dormitory into which Miss Mary's room opened, and standing in its midst, with my white night-gown gathered up in one hand lest its length should trip me up, shouted at the top of my clear, ringing voice:

"Det up, zoo naughty durls!" thus disturbing the repose of twelve young damsels, none the best pleased to be roused from their slumbers at four a.m. by a mite, who—to quote the elegant Miss Amelia Staveley's own words—"ought to have been well whipped."

Perhaps the said mite ought to have received that chastisement; all I can say is, I know she didn't, but was instead gravely reasoned with upon her sin to such an extent by Miss Mary and Miss Jane, in one combined burst of eloquence, that she shed bitter tears upon her pinafore, and had an uncomfortable feeling that Polly knew all about it, and cried out more jeeringly than usual as she went slinking

through the hall: "Fie for shame! fie for shame! Oh, you naughty girl."

During the first three years of my sojourn at Summerfield, my father, Sir Charles Vansitart, of Hazledene, lived abroad. When I say lived, I mean wandered; for he never settled down anywhere for long together, and his yacht, the *Ladybird*, carried him from this fair land to that, in search of peace and forgetfulness. Meanwhile an old family servant, Terence Mahaffy by name, reigned supreme at Hazledene, and doubtless Roland guarded well the gate of his absent lord. That was the one thing connected with my home that I used to dream about—the deep, mellow baying of the old hound, as Terence carried me into the yard to look at him, chained beside the big kennel, and looking so wistfully at us both, as much as to say: "Do let me loose, and give me a run all about the place." Roland had belonged to my father from the day he was a blundering, staggering pup, with soft feet many sizes too big for him, and a marvellous attachment existed between the two. When the hound lay with his big head resting on his outstretched paws, and his golden-brown eyes fixed upon the gateway, Terence would say: "It's watching for the master, he is—is Roland."

I could remember this, and the sudden bound of the loving creature, as papa's step was heard—the sharp, peculiar bark of rapture that was quite different from Roland's voice at other times.

Was it any wonder that anyone or anything should love papa?

Why, when he came back after his long wandering, and standing in the hall at Summerfield—with Polly looking on critically all the time—caught me in his strong arms and held me close, when he cried out, "Is this my little girl?" how glad I was: how my little heart swelled within me to think that I could answer "Yes;" to think that of all the little girls in all the wide wide world, I, Nellie Vansitart was his—his very own! Oh, the rapture of that golden day when first he came to see me, and I led him—he so big and tall, and I so small beside him—into the long, low drawing-room, where the very roses at the window seemed blooming to do him honour.

He sat in the seat that I loved, because there you could smell the sweet breath of the flowers; he looked at me with such dear loving eyes; he bent and

touched my long locks, drawing them through his fingers, and a sudden shyness coming over me, was constrained to throw my hands about Miss Mary's neck, and hide my face upon her kindly breast! Oh, happy, golden day! Well might the sun shine; well might the birds sing. I could not walk staidly at papa's side. I held his hand, and danced along. And then how droll it was, after we had passed through the corn-fields, where the grass stood tall and green on either hand, rustling softly in the gentle summer wind, to escort him to Mr. Twinkler's shop, and watch the embarrassment of that good man as he did up a packet of sweets for me. He answered papa's courteous remark upon the fineness of the season with a "Quite so, my lord," that made me run out of the shop to have my laugh outside, where papa found me sitting among the buttercups that were making the banks golden. I got up as he approached, spread out my dress, and made him a reverence like the one that Monsieur José, our dancing-master, had taught me, crying gleefully: "I hope I see my lord well!"

I was glad that day to see my school-fellows, of whom there were five-and-twenty, peeping through the school-room windows at papa; and held myself more erect, giving a proud look up at the tall figure beside me. Miss Staveley's papa had been to see her only the week before, and he was short and squat, and chuckled to himself after every sentence. He called us the "lassies," too, which I did not think at all genteel, though he was a barrister; indeed, I confided to my companion in our walk next day that he must look very ugly in his wig, with which criticism she agreed as fluently as our halting school-girl French permitted.

After this visit from my father I was in a very effusive state of mind, and treated all the girls of my own class to sweets and a new steel pen each: pens, be it known, of rare and curious construction, the which, as I have never seen any like them since, must have been a patent of Mr. Twinkler's own.

"Beg pardon, miss; I trust his lordship is in good health?" said that worthy, on the occasion of this reckless and wholesale expenditure on my part; and I think I liked the other girls to hear this remark of Mr. Twinkler's, and was a little condescending in my manner during our walk home. Pride, they say, must have a fall, and on this occasion mine met with such disaster as no tumble of less magnitude

than complete head-over-heels can typify; for we met Miss Theodosia in one of her most uncompromising and acrid humours. This good woman was in the habit of visiting with ceaseless energy the poor of her brother's parish, and investing the unhappy little bodies of the children thereof in flannel garments of so harsh and raspy a nature, that their tender skins were frayed, and their young lives rendered miserable thereby. It was said that on one occasion she made with her own fair hands, for a girl who promised to be the village beauty some day, a bonnet of such awful proportions and general outline that that young damsel wept copiously from "Dearly beloved brethren" to the conclusion of the second lesson, when, her grief becoming uncontrollable, she was led forth sobbing by Mr. Tapper, the sexton, and set upon a nice cold tombstone to "bring her to."

Indeed, Miss Theodosia hated anything like personal adornment, and had waged such a life-war against beauty of every kind, that it was a wonder she let the flowers grow in the vicarage garden, and didn't have the robins shot for wearing red waistcoats.

Seeing us—six of us—chattering and laughing, and making as much noise as a flock of starlings, coming towards her, I suppose that all her nature rose in protest against our light-heartedness. The path through the fields was narrow, and we could only walk two abreast; I, as the heroine of the hour, being one of the first couple.

I am inclined to think that there was always something peculiarly aggravating to Miss Theodosia in my appearance, and peculiarly antipathetic to her ideas of the training suitable to youth in the way in which the gentle sisters, Jane and Mary, spoilt me. Now, as I noted the extra rigidity of her always upright figure, and the stony stare of her colourless eyes, despair claimed me for its own.

"Out walking by yourselves, young ladies, eh?" she said, standing there right in our way, and looking, in her hideous tea-green dress and granny bonnet, like a blot upon the beauty of the fair summer day.

"We're allowed to walk by ourselves through the fields any time out of school," said I, feeling by the sudden grip of my companion's hand on mine that she was rendered incapable by cowardice of holding parley with the enemy.

"Umph! I shouldn't let you go out alone if I had the management of you," said Miss Theodosia.

The body of the force following in my

wake now huddled one against the other, listening eagerly to what was going on; and glancing back, I felt that the credit of the Vansitarts was at stake.

"But, you see, you haven't the care of us," said I, showing a bold front to the enemy, though I could feel my heart beating to my finger-ends for all that.

"You are a very rude little girl," said Miss Theodosia, getting as unwholesomely green in the face as the shade of her bonnet-ribbons; "and a very untidy one too," she added. "If you were my little girl I should have all this cut off, and done up in a crop."

"This" was my brown mane, that Miss Mary had never yet had the heart to turn up high with a comb, or prison in a net, after the hideous fashion of that day; and oh, horror! the bony fingers of the vicar's sister clutched a bunch of the locks that papa's dear hand had touched so lovingly only a day ago.

"But I'm not your little girl," I cried, struggling against the loathing of her touch that possessed my soul; "you haven't got any little girl, not one, if you had she wouldn't love you—not a bit," I added, with that air of entire conviction that is beyond words exasperating to the subject of it.

Indignation held Miss Theodosia silent from sheer breathlessness, while with me fear began to take the place of courage; and yielding to the impulse of flight I sped by her like a lapwing, the upper class of the lower division of Summerfield Academy for Young Ladies following in much haste and dire disorder.

In all my life at school I had never yet had a concealment from Miss Mary. Even when, in days that now seemed long ago, I plucked some little tempting bright green balls from the fruit-trees on the kitchen-garden wall, and was straightway overwhelmed by a sense of my wrong-doing, my first impulse was to seek out that dear instructress, and lay upon her lap a little guilty hand, upon whose open palm lay the unlawful spoil. Now conscience warned me that I had broken the laws of courtesy, that I had been less than a gentlewoman—that good old-fashioned title that meant so much, and that all our training at Summerfield strove to make us worthy of. Well, it was all told before I had been home an

hour, and if the secret sympathies of the mother confessor were inclined to side with the penitent, that fact—of which I was furtively and tenderly conscious—was allowed to avail me nought as to the reckoning to be paid.

Which heart I wonder was the heavier, Miss Mary's or mine, as hand in hand we went upon our way towards the vicarage, with its many gables, and its marvellous old yew-tree, pruned into the semblance of an arch above the gateway?

Whose eyes were most prone to grow misty with tears, hers or mine, I wonder, as the moment of my self-abasement drew nigh?

I almost fancy as I write that I can hear her sweet low voice, trembling a little, yet—as I know—full of resolve that I shall do what is the only right thing, as she leads me to Miss Theodosia's side, and says:

"I have brought a little girl to tell you how sorry she is for her rude words yesterday."

The pride of the Vansitarts was not in a very flourishing condition, as I stood there blushing up to the parting of the hair Miss Theodosia so highly disapproved of, and down to my chin that shook with nervousness; but the clasp of the hand that held mine gave me courage. I looked the offended dame in the face, and spoke out clearly enough as I owned myself wrong.

How well I remember it all; and the good vicar coming in, seeing me in tears—for when the ordeal was over I melted into limp distress—saying, as he patted my little hot hand:

"Tut, tut, tut! what's all this, eh?"

Papa came to see me many times after that, and the "golden days" in my life came round in happy succession. I hardly thought then, dearly as I loved him, how their memory would shine one day with a new and exquisitely tender light—the light that shines for all of us on the things that we have "loved and lost;" but I was very happy, and grew tall and stately with the passing of the years.

At last I was considered old enough to go home to Hazledene for the summer holidays, and when I got there, found that Roland was not by any means so big as he had seemed to be in the days when Terence carried me into the yard to look at him.

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